AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-15. (Cancelled).

16. (Withdrawn) A transformed plant cell that lacks a polypeptide containing a sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein, compared with the wild type cell, the transformed plant cell has a higher tolerance to salt, chilling, pathogens, oxidative stress, or water-deficit due to absence of expression of the polypeptide.

17. (Withdrawn) The plant cell of claim 16, wherein the cell is an Arabidopsis cell.

18-19. (Cancelled).

20. (Withdrawn) A method of producing a transformed plant cell, the method comprising introducing into a plant cell a nucleic acid that decreases the expression of a gene encoding a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein, compared with the wild type cell, the transformed plant cell has a higher tolerance to salt, chilling, pathogens, oxidative stress, or water-deficit due to absence of the polypeptide.

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Previously Presented and Allowed) A transformed plant cell comprising a recombinant nucleic acid that encodes the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9.

23. (Previously Presented and Allowed) A transgenic plant comprising a recombinant nucleic acid that encodes the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9.

24. (Previously Presented and Allowed) A method of producing a transformed plant cell, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a recombinant nucleic acid encoding the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9, and

expressing the polypeptide in the cell.

25. (Previously Presented and Allowed) A method of producing a transgenic plant, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a recombinant nucleic acid encoding the heterologous polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 9,

expressing the polypeptide in the cell, and

cultivating the cell to regenerate a plant.

26. (Currently Amended) A transformed plant cell comprising a heterologous DNA sequence ~~containing the recombinant nucleic acid of claim 6~~ that encodes a polypeptide containing an amino acid sequence at least 70% identical to SEQ ID NO:9 and having activity of increasing sensitivity of a plant to an environmental factor.

27. (Currently Amended) A ~~transgenic~~ transformed plant cell comprising a heterologous DNA sequence ~~containing the recombinant nucleic acid of claim 7~~ that, under a high stringency condition, hybridizes to a probe containing the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:20, or the complement thereof, wherein the DNA sequence encodes a polypeptide that has activity of increasing sensitivity of a plant to an environmental factor.

28. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a transformed plant cell, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a heterologous DNA sequence ~~containing the nucleic acid of claim 6~~ that encodes a polypeptide containing an amino acid sequence at least 70% identical to SEQ ID NO:9 and having activity of increasing sensitivity of a plant to an environmental factor, and

expressing the polypeptide in the cell.

29. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a transgenic plant, the method comprising[[:]] cultivating the transformed cell of claim 26 to regenerate a plant.

~~introducing into a plant cell a heterologous sequence containing the nucleic acid of claim 7, and~~

~~cultivating the cell to regenerate a plant.~~

30. (Currently Amended) ~~The isolated nucleic acid of claim 6~~ The transformed plant cell of claim 26, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO: 9.

31. (Currently Amended) ~~The isolated nucleic acid of claim 30~~ The transformed plant cell of claim 26, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 9.

32. (Currently Amended) ~~The isolated nucleic acid of claim 31~~ The transformed plant cell of claim 26, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 9.

33. (Cancelled) ~~The isolated nucleic acid of claim 32, wherein the amino acid sequence is SEQ ID NO: 9.~~

34. (New) A method of producing a transformed plant cell, the method comprising:

introducing into a plant cell a heterologous DNA sequence that, under a high stringency condition, hybridizes to a probe containing the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:20, or the complement thereof, wherein the DNA sequence encodes a polypeptide that has activity of increasing sensitivity of a plant to an environmental factor., and

expressing the polypeptide in the cell.

35. (New) A method of producing a transgenic plant, the method comprising cultivating the transformed cell of claim 27 to regenerate a plant.